

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 05734 291309Z

43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 EB-11 MC-02 ACDA-19 OMB-01

SAB-01 IO-14 IGA-02 DRC-01 TRSE-00 /118 W

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5777

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

DA WASHDC

USCINCEUR

USMTM DHAHRAN

DISTR ENG RIYADH SA/SANG PM

S E C R E T JIDDA 5734

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SA

SUBJ: SANG MODERNIZATION PROPOSAL

REF: JIDDA 5733

TEXT OF AMBASSADOR'S LETTER TO PRINCE ABDULLA FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: HRH PRINCE ABDULLAH IBN ABDUL AZIZ, COMMANDER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD. DECEMBER 26TH, 1973. YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS:

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL GUARD ON 13 DECEMBER 1973 IS THE INITIAL PHASE IN THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM. THIS INITIAL PHASE PROVIDES FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF TWO INFANTRY BATTALIONS AND THE FORMATION OF TWO ARTILLERY BATTERIES AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF 200 MILLION DOLLARS OVER A PERIOD OF FOUR YEARS.

AS COVERED IN THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS, SIGNED ON 19 MARCH 1973, SUBSEQUENT PRIORITIES FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION SHALL BE DEVELOPED BY

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JIDDA 05734 291309Z

MUTUAL AGREEMENT. SHOULD A MUTUAL DECISION BE MADE TO

CONTINUE THE PROGRAM FOR AN ADDITIONAL TWO INFANTRY BATTALIONS WITH SUPPORTING ARTILLERY, THE COSTS WOULD INCREASE AN ESTIMATED 130 MILLION DOLLARS TO A TOTAL OF 330 MILLION DOLLARS. THE PROGRAM WOULD BE EXTENDED FROM ITS PRESENT FOUR YEARS TO FIVE AND ONE HALF YEARS, PROVIDED THE DECISION TO CONTINUE THE PROGRAM FOR THE ADDITIONAL TWO BATTALIONS IS MADE NOT LATER THAN THREE YEARS AFTER THE INITIAL PROPOSAL IS APPROVED BY THE SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL INCLUDED AN AIR DEFENSE PLATOON EQUIPPED WITH 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS MOUNTED IN THE CADILLAC GAGE ARMORED CAR, BUT AS YOUR HIGHNESS WISHES, THIS EQUIPMENT CAN BE REPLACED WITH THE VULCAN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. THE AIR DEFENSE PLATOON IN EACH BATTALION WOULD THEN BE EQUIPPED WITH SIX VULCAN, 20MM MULTIPLE BARREL AIR DEFENSE WEAPONS. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE ADDITIONAL COST FOR INCLUDING VULCAN WOULD BE TWO AND ONE HALF MILLION DOLLARS FOR THE FIRST TWO BATTALIONS.

THE TOTAL PROGRAM COST FOR FOUR INFANTRY BATTALIONS, ONE ARTILLERY BATTALION, AND THE VULCAN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM WOULD BE 335 MILLION DOLLARS SPREAD OVER A FIVE AND ONE HALF YEAR PERIOD AS SHOWN BELOW:

1ST YEAR - \$80 MILLION
2ND YEAR - \$70 MILLION
3RD YEAR - \$80 MILLION
4TH YEAR - \$40 MILLION
5TH YEAR - \$35 MILLION
6TH YEAR - \$30 MILLION

IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ABOVE COSTS ARE ESTIMATES ONLY, BASED ON TODAY'S COST WITH A REASONABLE FACTOR FOR INFLATION. SHOULD THE COST OF MATERIALS AND SERVICES INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY BEYOND CURRENT ESTIMATES, THE ABOVE FIGURES WOULD HAVE TO BE ADJUSTED ACCORDINGLY.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS READY TO ASSIST IN THE MODERNIZATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD. WE AWAIT YOUR DECISION ON OUR PROPOSAL AND ARE PREPARED TO PROCEED AT ANY TIME.

SECRET

PAGE 03 JIDDA 05734 291309Z

ATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD. WE AWAIT YOUR DECISION ON OUR PROPOSAL AND ARE PREPARED TO PROCEED AT ANY TIME.

RESPECTFULLY,

JAMES E. AKINS (UNQUOTE)
AKINS

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NNN

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